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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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REPORT NO.

COUNTRY Czechoslovakia

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

SOURCE

Pre-Military Training

1. Source stated that all Czechoslovak nationals between the ages of 20 to 50 years were required, without exception, to register with the military authorities in 1954 in accordance with a governmental decree. All personnel were informed of this mandatory requirement via the radio, newspapers, public posters and oral media.
2. Source did not know of any individuals being drafted immediately into Czechoslovak military service in the period after the registration. However, he believed that the military authorities placed all individuals into various unidentified categories determined by age, profession, health and prior military service.
3. Shortly after this registration period many of the youth working in the United Steel Works received written notification from the military authorities stating that they were required to attend pre-military instruction periods and should report this fact to their employers. However, source did not know which

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office in the United Steel Works was responsible for the pre-military training given by that national enterprise. He believed that within the United Steel Works administrative structure, there was a section which coordinated the training requirements between the United Steel Works and the military authorities in Kladno or Prague, set aside facilities within the enterprise area for instruction and training purposes, and made available the employees required to attend this course. He was not certain if it was standard practice that all pre-military training was given at the place of employment. He did assume that all national enterprises employing a sufficient number of youths required to take this training were required to establish an individual section to coordinate this pre-military training program with the military authorities. Source was unable to determine which government ministry supervised the pre-military training program.

Source stated that beginning in May 1954 and lasting through October 1954, approximately 800 youths, including some who had World War II and pre-1948 military service, were required to attend pre-military instruction at the United Steel Works. For approximately six hours on Friday, theoretical and field training was given to two groups of about 400 each within the enterprise area. One group began training at 0600 and the second at 1500 hours. Individuals were assigned to each group in accordance with their regular work shift hours, since this training was given on off-duty time.

From conversations with personnel taking this instruction, personal observation, and remarks made by individuals familiar with the program [redacted] source stated that once a person was assigned to a specific group, he was required to receive all instruction with that group. Transfer from one group to another was only possible under extraordinary conditions. Source believed that each group of 400 was broken down into small units, each being instructed in some specific field of communication in addition to receiving fundamental infantry training. He had at times seen groups of these trainees at a distance working with unidentified radios. Classroom instruction was given in two rooms of the enterprise apprentice school, and practical exercises were given in open areas within the enterprise. 50X1

Source stated that the small units received special instruction either in radio, telephone or teletype communications. Non-ethnic Czechoslovaks, such as Hungarians and Ruthenians, were usually assigned to construction groups because of language difficulties. One employee of source's, a Hungarian, was assigned in this way. The construction groups were trained in the emplacement of telephone poles, telephone lines and fundamental field maintenance.

Source believed that the classroom training covered Army organization, discipline, infantry tactics and electrical communications. Instruction was given by at least one unidentified Czech Army officer and an unidentified NCO believed to have been stationed in the vicinity of Kladno. The entire Kladno factory program seemed to have been supervised and controlled by an unidentified Czech Army major who came from either Kladno or Prague.

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8. All personnel wore OD uniforms, which looked like workers' clothing; overseas-type caps; military-type boots; and a belt. During rifle instruction each individual was armed with either a '98 rifle or machine pistol. Source also observed LMG's used during instruction. He believed that all of these weapons were stored in the military storeroom located inside the enterprise area in the vicinity of the apprentice school.
9. Source stated that all personnel in the Kladno factory pre-military instruction program had fired twice during the period May through October 1954 on the military firing range located about three kilometers northwest of the United Steel Works. Source did not know which weapons had been used on the range but assumed that each individual had a chance to fire the rifle, machine pistol and LMG. At one time he observed outdoor instruction in gas mask drill.
10. Source stated that all marching commands identified each of the two training units as a company. However, he had never heard of this training group being identified as a specific unit, officially or unofficially. He never observed any insignia, arm band, or rank designations used by these personnel and did not know of any titles given to trainees or instructors.
11. A Hungarian worker told source that trainees were informed that after the course of instruction was completed, they should expect three months of duty within a caserne in order to learn barracks life. Source believed that the program would continue indefinitely but had no further information on it.

#### Reserve Officer Training in Czechoslovakia

12. Although source knew of several friends who were reserve officers, he was able to elaborate on the military background and present reserve officer training of just one individual. In April [redacted]

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[redacted]

he was informed that he must attend an evening, two-hour, reserve officer training program twice a week; he was asked what type of training he would prefer. Source's friend told the personnel at the military headquarters that he had no interest in the training program and returned home without indicating any preference for training. Within a few weeks, however, he was again called before the Regional Military Headquarters and notified that he was assigned to a reserve technical officer staff. Within one month he was also required to attend two hours of reserve officer training instruction (1800-2000) twice a week somewhere in the Smichov district of Prague XVI. According to this same friend, a reserve captain who was released from the service in 1946, all the instruction received as of April 1955 was primarily theoretical and covered such subjects as "democratic" (i.e., Soviet and satellite) build-up of troops, Soviet technical advances, Soviet military tactics and atomic warfare.

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3. According to source's friend, the instruction in atomic warfare was so general and unappreciated that when the instructor stated that the placing of a newspaper over the head during an atomic attack would protect an individual from burns, one student asked which newspaper. The instructor immediately gave the local Communist Party newspaper. Since then the students have joked that the "Party paper" would protect one from anything.

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Release and Retirement of Career Officers

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learned from two employees that they were formerly career officers in the Czechoslovak Army who had been released from active duty, without pension privileges, for political unreliability.

15. According to source, one was a former cavalry captain with 20 years of active service, who was released in 1953 for not maintaining enough interest during political indoctrination training periods. The second individual was a former artillery and infantry major with 25 years of service, who was released in 1954 for inefficiency and being overage in grade. Source estimated that this man was 50 years old.

16. Source stated that although their release from active service was for political unreliability, he assumed that they were permitted to work [redacted] since they were only "minor offenders."

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17. Source personally knew two other individuals who had been retired from active duty with full pension privileges. One, a former colonel who was 64 years old, was pensioned in 1950 after 35 years of service. Source believed that this person received 580 crowns a month. The second, a former lieutenant colonel, was retired in 1947 after 35 years of service and was believed to receive 280 crowns a month. Source had no further information on these individuals.

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